Monday 6 Mar. /48.

My dear Joey—

Your's of 2nd reached me on Saty Evg too late for the mail. I know not how the Dr. & C.r letter &c. may have stood between us, but it is rather remarkable that on Saty. I sat down to write to Oakes (from whom I had 2 mans. lts.) & your good self; but Sickness & severe pains in the nerves of the head (Tic dol.) drove me to my bed after completing the first of them — I send you the best I can do in the Stipulicida way. The Carpels are burst, but I see there are seeds (I hope some perfect ones) remaining — At all events I have no better, but my Eyes will not enable me just now to judge as to the sufficiency of what I send You. I have no Lophospermia, in any State — What I had, prior to the conflagration, was from Nuttall —

Within the last few weeks we have had renewed anxiety & sorrow in the family — Do you remember Mrs Depeyster, the mother of my brothers' wife? — She was very suddenly attacked with the prevalent typhoid pneumonia, which carried her off at the expiration of 3 weeks — Her immediate death was extremely lingering, tho' I trust not painful — I passed the last 26 hours in her room, the family being all worn out with long previous watching — For several days she was speechless, & apparently senseless; & for the last 3 or 4 was considered by the Physicians (Drs Horsack & Rogers) to be actually dying, from hour to hour! She expired, at last, without a struggle, her extremities having been dead & cold for several hours previous.

She was a kind & gentle spirit, & will be much missed in the domestic circle, in which she moved - I attended her remains to the High Land (opp.te W. point) where they were conveyed for interment - Whether I then caught the severe cold I now have, I cannot say; but I have been very poorly ever since, & quite unfit for exertion either of mind or body - Indeed, I may say, that I am very low, & I often doubt whether it consists with the will of God that I shall ever get up again - I have had very little trouble from the bleeding lately, but my nervous system is so greatly prostrated, that in some shape or other, I am continually suffering inconvenience - Hence, a more cold, settled in my head, has laid hold of the nerves, about the eyes & temples, & causes me great pain, at intervals - But, no more of my poor worn-out body - Would you believe that I am not yet in possession of my "Manual" which I sent to the Rague of a binder 2 or 3 days after you so kindly forwarded it to me! So it is, however, & tho' I have hurried him up many times, he always finds some excuse - I have not had (& do not expect to receive) a Copy of Tuckerman's Lichens, from his liberal (!) hand - If therefore you can control a Set of the Sheets please let me have them; if not, purchase for me that Number of the Acad. Proc.s - I have not the 11th nor yet the 10th Vol. as the fire only left me 4 Vols. of myself, & I have not since been able to afford to complete them. I will talk to Thorburn about the Manual, when I am able to creep about a little - I am sorry for what you say about Chapman's herb. Fearing that straightened circumstances must have induced him to offer it for sale - I should find it a very great trial myself

I saw the pains of our Rochr. friend, in the last Silliman - Truly he "takes beat all"! If the Sartwellia plant be a nov. gen. of C. oligo. where & what is the type? - But - Marvel of marvels! he writes me that he has "looked over" my work "with no little satisfaction" & had "no doubt of its favourable reception" adding "I do not know but the plan is as nearly perfect as can now be expected"!!! Of course he reserves his own views, wherein we differs (pretty frequently) but this "will not detract from the great merit of the work"!!! Then follows the recital of his "wrongs" in my quotations of his old names &c. which has more of the pathetic than the indignant about it - I mean to write him very gently, on the subject, & to make no more issues with him, since it is plain that our general views on Nat. Hist. are totally different - He is a good man, I believe, but with jealous excitability on the subject of his Botanical (!!) reputation - and - I cannot altogether wonder at it! Leaving him, however, for better game, you will be pleased to learn that our good Scott says "You have done us excellent service in the manner in which you have clasped the Carices" x x x "I shall profit much from your sectional characters. I wish you would try their fitness by ranging all the N. am. sp. under them - I have not seriously studied grouping of late & when I do I shall closely examine your sections. By the time your work goes to a 2d. ed.n I will have some suggestions ready for your consid.n" x x He gives valuable information & criticism as usual - I shall send you his letter when opportunity offers - By the way do not forget that you have not yet sent me your Obs. on the 2 last, which you said I was to have - when you find time!!

I am pleased (that astonished) to find that all our botanical & collecting friends seem well satisfied with my work, the difference so essentially from their former "mumpsimus" - I believe all but Sartwell have written to me - From Oakes I have had 2 letters - He & Olney speak in very strong terms of approbation - Kneiskern - Varey - Mead, also express satisfaction - I showed that "mumpsimus" to Prof. Agassiz & he pronounced it a "humdinger" - Prof. Gray is pleased with it - Bolles says it will be "the standard work" (& 4 others say so, he said.) I showed the Bark Bottle which he handed me to read - Mr. Sprague read an elaborate Report of the Casting, & gave it back with the single remark that it was "creditable" - Mr. Peabody read the Report & Dr. Hyde Brattle & Shattuck & Bowditch & Education - All of this is, of course, strictly confidential - I told him that a readable article in the N. Am. Rev. could be made by taking up, & giving the N. Am. Bot. from Dec. Syst. which I gave to me in my hand in connection with the completion of Exp. Vol. which I am kindly expected to give to Prof. Gray. He said that Prof. G. had suggested to him & Edwards to favor me with some information as to the reception the Report might meet with from the Scientific Men of the country - I told him it would be pleasant, & carefully avoided the last from what I have seen of the Scientific Conventions & Societies (could attribute to N. A. Bot. enough to be unpleasant) - As to Gray & Torrey, I said that I thought that our friend Joseph to undertake it - that it was of other & it is a further consideration - Prof. Agassiz & Dana spoke to me about Gray & Torrey, & Dana said that he would do it, as Gray would know what to say - Now this convinces me that I must be pleased, & carefully avoided the last from what I have seen of the Scientific Conventions & Societies (could attribute to N. A. Bot. enough to be unpleasant) - As to Gray & Torrey, I said that I thought that our friend Joseph to undertake it - that it was of other & it is a further consideration - Prof. Agassiz & Dana spoke to me about Gray & Torrey, & Dana said that he would do it, as Gray would know what to say - Now this convinces me

For the more I look at the Chart, & Dana & Prof. Gray & all whom I have seen & have very high value formerly & present great Sectional Chart, indicate natural groups, & that hereafter something like them (I do not go beyond that) will be received by common consent - Were it otherwise, some of our above cited friends wd not like or understand an arrangement so different from that to which they have been accustomed - Whereas it is natural, it commends itself to them at once.

I believe there is one point in National politics on which we think quite alike – an aversion to enlarge the area of Slavery – and judging from the course of Events, & the treaty now before the Senate, there seems no chance of its being in this important subject, either by the "Wilmot Proviso" or otherwise – What think You?

I pray you, my dear Gray, to excuse this rambling incoherent letter, as my head is in much pain – but I wished to send you all my little news, since I last wrote – I should beg you not to work too hard at the Geneva, but that I feel you have so delightful a debasement at Boston, that you will need (many?) hours of relief – I doubt not but that Sprague is already far ahead of most of our Physicians & botanists. I hope he will stick steadily to the Job.

Kindest love in the Square, & believe me

Yrs. affy Jno. C.

I have not seen Torrey for some time – His family have returned to N.Y. Halloon days. I have not touched the Kaskaskys, nor any thing else lately –

Chas Ives Wright
6. Planostaff Kans
Prof. A. Gray
Harvard Univ.
Cambridge
Massachusetts.

This is one of the outside sheets of a half ream of very cheap writing paper, & hence I suppose I ought not to complain of it's being torn & greasy! tho' pos. it may not be better in either respect & still it may make better lamp-lighters, from the latter quality!